



THE URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL
OF HOUGHTON-LE-SPRING.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE


Medical Officer of Health

(DR. D. S. PARK)

For the Year ending 31st December,
1905.

HOUGHTON-LE-SPRING :

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HOUGHTON-LE-SPRING,

February 5th, 1906.

TO THE URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL OF HOUGHTON-LE-SPRING.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

It is again my duty to lay before you my Annual Health Report for the year ending December 31st, 1905, and to submit for your consideration such matters of importance as come within the scope of your jurisdiction as the Sanitary Authority.

I have included all the tables of the Local Government Board with the exception of Table II. which, as you know, Gentlemen, refers to sub-districts or parishes of known population, and does not apply to this district, which is a district in itself, and not made up of sub-districts or parishes of known population.

It may be convenient here to explain the Tables in detail.

Table I. gives the vital statistics of the whole district during the year.

Table II., as I have said, does not apply to this district.

Table III. gives the cases of Infectious Disease notified during the year.

Table IV. gives the causes of and ages at death during the year.

Table V. gives the infant mortality during the year. In order to complete this Table I had to apply to the Registrar of Births for the number of illegitimate children registered during the year. For this information he is entitled to make a reasonable charge.

By a perusal of Table I. we shall find that 144 deaths have been registered during the year. In estimating the mortality, however, it is necessary to follow the instructions of the Local Government Board, so as to avoid all possibility of error.

Six deaths occurred to non-residents or those persons brought into the district, on account of sickness or other causes, and dying in public institutions there, and two to residents or those persons who have been taken out of the district on account of sickness or other causes and have died in public institutions elsewhere, so that after making the necessary corrections the total number of deaths upon which the mortality must be based becomes reduced to 140.

Death-rate.—If we estimate the population at the middle of the year, as required by the Local Government Board, at 8,726, this is equivalent to a death-rate of 16·04 per 1000 per annum, and an infant mortality of 47·8 per cent.

Birth-rate.—The births for the year number 355.

195 Males,

160 Females,

representing a birth-rate of 40·6 per 1000 per annum, and a natural gain to the population of 215.

The following table gives the births, male and female, including birth-rate and natural increase to the population for the last four years.

Year	Births	Males	Females	Rate	Increase
1902	335	163	172	42·1	188
1903	337	172	165	41·8	149
1904	342	190	152	39·6	136
1905	355	195	160	40·6	215

The death-rate per 1000 registered births is 143·6.

The subjoined table gives the death-rate per 1000 from the principal Zymotic diseases for the last three years:—

No.	Diseases	1903.	1904.	1905.
1	Small-pox	—	—	—
2	Scarlet Fever	·12	·58	·11
3	Diphtheria and Membranous Croup	·61	1·3	·57
4	Typhoid and Continued Fever	·24	·58	·34
5	Measles	·37	1·6	—
6	Whooping Cough	—	·1	·11
7	Diarrhœa, Dysentery and Enteritis... ..	·49	·4	·8
8	Phthisis	1·6	1·2	·57
9	Acute Diseases of the Lungs	4·8	4·3	2·4
10	Other Tubercular Diseases	·49	·35	·45

The Zymotic death-rate is 1·93.

New Cases of Sickness.—The Infectious Disease Notification Act has been in force in this division of the Union since 1st February, 1890.

It is my invariable practice to visit and inspect the premises occupied by the patients with as little delay as possible after receiving the Notification Forms, and to give such instructions as to isolation and disinfection as the nature of the case may require.

I need not remind you, Gentlemen, that we are a mining population with a high birth-rate, and as our houses are mostly of the cottage property type, home isolation is practically an impossibility. Indeed the resources of the householders are often severely taxed in order to provide sleeping accommodation for their families with a proper regard for the separation of the sexes. Under the circumstances it is the duty of the community at large to support your Council by availing themselves of the provision you have made out of the public funds for the isolation and treatment of all infectious cases occurring within your district; and now that the hospital is free to all, there should be no hesitation on the part of the public to avail themselves of hospital relief in all infectious cases.

Disinfectants.—We are liberal in our use of disinfectants. They

are supplied free of charge, and your Inspector himself often personally superintends their use, so that the householder is put to no expense over disinfecting and fumigating his premises. It is impossible, however, to disinfect such articles as the bed and bedding at home. We would, therefore, urge upon the householder, as much in his own interest as in that of the community at large, to avail himself of the use of your portable disinfecting apparatus for the disinfection of all such articles; and as the apparatus is taken to the house of the patient, and all disinfection is done free of charge, this course should be followed in all cases.

In all cases removed to hospital we insist upon this form of disinfection. If it is necessary in the interest of the public health to remove infectious cases to hospital, it is no less necessary to thoroughly disinfect all contaminated articles.

Infectious Sickness.—76 cases have been notified during the year, viz. :—

- 11 Diphtheria,
- 2 Membranous Croup,
- 16 Erysipelas,
- 32 Scarlet Fever,
- 15 Typhoid Fever.

Table III. gives the diseases, ages, &c., which please see.

There has been a very gratifying and substantial decrease in the infectious sickness during the past year as compared with the previous year. The cases were all investigated in the usual way, but my rounds of inspection usually revealed nothing of an insanitary character, as the marginal notes will show.

Diphtheria.—Notwithstanding the prevalence of Diphtheria all over the country, we have been singularly free from the disease during the past year. Until within recent years it was found almost exclusively in towns and populous centres, now, however, it occurs as frequently in scattered rural districts as in crowded cities. No doubt the decrease of Scarlet Fever and Measles has in some measure contributed to the decrease in the Diphtheria cases, as there can be no question that when these diseases are prevalent in a district, there is a greater predisposition to Diphtheria, as was shown in our own district in the previous year, when the majority of the cases occurred to persons who were suffering or had recently recovered from one or other of these diseases before Diphtheria supervened.

Membranous Croup.—The two cases of Membranous Croup belonged to the same family and unfortunately terminated fatally. The Notification Forms were not received until after death. With the exception of some stable manure found in the yard, everything was in order.

Scarlet Fever.—Scarlet Fever continues to cling to the district with all its characteristic tenacity. It is spread in the usual way by indiscriminate visiting at infected houses and a disregard of the most ordinary precautions. Two cases were not notified until desquamation was well advanced, owing to the parents having failed to recognize that there was anything amiss with the children until the peeling process, accompanied with dropsy, had set in. For years back the type of the disease has been very mild, and the eruption often so transitory and ill-defined

as to make the diagnosis a matter of some difficulty. In such cases it is difficult to convince the people that precautionary measures are necessary. A word of caution by the medical attendant, before the arrival of the Medical Officer of Health, would no doubt do much good.

Typhoid Fever.—The cases were all carefully investigated, and whatever defects were found on my rounds of inspection are given in the marginal notes. Four of the cases occurred to members of the same family. I was particularly anxious to have the first case removed to hospital as the house accommodation was not satisfactory and the mother herself was far from well. The mother, however, would not give her consent, with the result that she contracted the disease and died. In all human probability had the first case been removed to hospital and the house and contaminated articles been fumigated and otherwise disinfected, as is our invariable practice in such cases, the subsequent cases might have been prevented and the mother's life spared. In the previous year no cases were reported from Chilton Moor, while in the present year one case only was notified. In this case the abominable stench coming from an adjoining field that had just been spread with town manure was looked upon as the cause of the illness. One of the cases removed to the hospital turned out to be one of sub-acute rheumatism. With regard to sex it will be observed that the proportion is about equal. The cases were not, as in the previous year, confined to any particular part of the town, but on the contrary were more or less scattered over the township, including Chilton Moor, as stated above.

Cholera.—During the hot summer months, and after periods of protracted drought, special precautions are taken with regard to the more frequent emptying and disinfection of the ashpits and privies, and a more frequent flushing and disinfection of the drains and sewers.

Erysipelas.—The only interesting feature in connection with the cases is the large proportion of females to males affected, and the complete absence of all sanitary defects. A few of the cases were secondary.

Chicken-pox.—Only a few cases of Chicken-pox have come under my observation during the past year. They were all of the ordinary type, and their diagnosis presented no difficulty whatever.

Measles.—We have been singularly free from Measles during the past year, the epidemic of the previous year apparently having exhausted itself upon the susceptible children of that period.

Diarrhœa.—For a few years back Diarrhœa has been decidedly on the decrease in this division of the Union. If the householder could only be induced to adopt the simple expedient of putting dry ashes under the seats each time the receptacles are used, much of the unpleasant smell arising from the close proximity of the out-offices to the back doors would be avoided and the surrounding air purified and sweetened. Though conscious of the good effect that such a precaution would have, many of the inhabitants are so indifferent that they are quite content to live amid their present surroundings rather than incur the trouble that such a simple expedient would entail.

Hospital Accommodation.—Our Isolation Hospital is set apart for ordinary infectious cases, and we have entered into an arrangement with the Houghton-le-Spring Rural District Council and the Hetton-le-Hole Urban Council to erect a joint hospital for the whole Union for the ex-

clusive treatment of Small-Pox cases occurring within the Union. All the preliminaries and legal arrangements are settled, and the scheme having been approved by the Local Government Board, the work will be proceeded with in due course.

Four cases were treated in the hospital during the year, viz. :—

- 1 Typhoid Fever,
- 2 Scarlet Fever,
- 1 Erysipelas,

all of which recovered.

Influenza.—Our sickness from Influenza is determined pretty much by the severity of the weather. As I have repeatedly remarked icy cold winds invariably lead to an outbreak of the disease no matter at what period of the year they may prevail. The type of the disease is altogether milder and the complications less severe than in former years.

Pneumonia and other Chest Affections.—These are now tabulated separately in place of being grouped together as formerly. Our mortality from chest affections, as I have repeatedly remarked, Gentlemen, is somewhat high. The North-East winds and the clayey subsoil upon which many of our houses are built are the only reasons I can offer for this condition of things.

There are other forms of sickness from which we have suffered during the past year, none of which, however, call for any special mention unless it be Ringworm.

Ringworm has been prevalent in the district during the past year. I have no doubt, whatever, that school attendance has done much to propagate and spread the disease. When it suits the parents' purpose to keep their children from school they have no difficulty whatever in finding a ready excuse, but when requested to do so by the teachers or their subordinates on account of some head affection or other sufficient reason, they are liable to become resentful if not abusive. If the Board of Education could only be induced to appoint a Medical Superintendent to supervise and inspect the children attending school so as to protect the healthy from the diseased, and to confer with and advise them on all matters coming within the jurisdiction of a health officer, much of the friction which now obtains would be avoided, and the school attendance itself would be much improved. It cannot be expected that respectable people will willingly send their children to school if they have reasonable grounds for believing that they will come in contact with verminous or diseased children. Education is compulsory, so that every possible precaution should be taken in the interests of the children.

In my investigation of an outbreak of Ringworm which occurred during the year, I was soon satisfied that the game called "Cap and Ball" is one which is peculiarly liable to spread the disease. In the game, as played in these parts, it seems the players place their open caps in a row on the ground and each player in turn tries to put the ball into one or other of the caps. If the player succeeds he goes on playing until he fails, when the other boys immediately pelt him on his bare head with their caps, and thus the game continues until each boy has been soundly well pelted on the head with the caps of the other boys.

Milk.—Our milk is of good quality, and is ample for all our re-

quirements. So far as I know no proceedings have been taken for adulteration.

Meat.—As you know, Gentlemen, our meat is mostly home-fed and is of high-class quality, and there has been no occasion to take proceedings against any of the butchers for offering for sale meat of a questionable or inferior quality.

The butchers are at all times ready and willing to afford your Inspector and Medical Officer all the assistance in their power when on their rounds of inspection.

I beg again, Gentlemen, to urge my disapproval of slaughtering in the shops. We all know the bad and demoralizing effect it has upon the young and ignorant. It affords them an opportunity which they are only too willing and eager to seize, to feast their eyes upon what they can see; and such sights at best can only tend to deaden all their finer feelings, and render them callous and indifferent to the sufferings of others.

Food and Drugs Act.—Proceedings under this Act are taken by the County Council.

Dairies and Cow Sheds.—These are regularly and systematically inspected by your Inspector, and on all occasions the premises have been in good order, and the light, air-space, ventilation, &c., have been in accordance with your bye-laws, so that we have now no complaints as to overcrowding.

Lodging-Houses.—The common lodging-houses are kept by respectable persons who afford us every facility for visiting their premises, and who keep us acquainted with the state of health of their lodgers, thus assisting in safe-guarding the district from the introduction of disease by tramps and others of a like class, who are the great infection carriers all over the country, and who by their obstinacy and indifference to the rights and wishes of others, become a perfect pest and a real danger to the public health. Sooner or later something definite must be done to limit the freedom and immunity of such persons.

The erection and supervision of model Lodging-houses by the Local Authority, with a system of baths and proper arrangements for the disinfection of the clothes, &c., with a daily inspection of the inmates, would do much to mitigate the evil and help to put a stop to the crowding of the infectious wards of our Workhouse by the cases of Scabies or Itch furnished by the fraternity who delight in nothing so much as contracting the disease in some Common Lodging-house in order to present themselves for admission into one or other of our Workhouses, well-knowing that their admission cannot be refused.

During the month of April a midnight inspection was made of the two houses—the number registered by your Inspector—when the premises were found to be overcrowded. The explanation given was that owing to the Tramway Scheme an extra body of labourers was attracted to the town, with the result that extra accommodation was required, and that rather than allow the men to sleep in the streets all night, the two lodging-house keepers gave them what accommodation they had.

To cope with the extra demand sometimes made at the week ends for such lodgings additional houses should be licensed.

Water supply.—Considerable difficulty was experienced during the latter part of the year in keeping up an adequate supply of water for the town. This was supposed to be due to a falling-off at the feeders and the increasing consumption of the Dubmire district and for trade purposes. Negotiations have been completed with the Sunderland and South Shields Water Company to lay on a supply to the latter district, and the work will be carried out at once. This arrangement will have the effect of adding some ten or fifteen thousand gallons per day to the supply available for the Urban District. Both reservoirs have been emptied twice during the year and thoroughly cleaned of all deposit. During the month of November it was found that they were leaking, and had to be repaired alternately so as to avoid as much inconvenience as possible. The crack broke out afresh and the rising main gave way, with the result that the town was twice without water for a few hours, and had it not been for the praiseworthy efforts of your Chairman and Surveyor serious consequences might have arisen. In view of the shifting condition of the Miller's Hill, the repairs to the rents in the reservoirs can at best be only of a temporary character. Should they break out afresh and prove of such a formidable nature as to render the reservoirs useless, a very serious state of things would result, as in that case the town would be without water. It is gratifying to know that every possible precaution is taken to guard against such a calamity. Nevertheless we cannot but view our water supply with some feeling of uneasiness. Meanwhile our supply in the reservoirs is such that we are pumping two hours a day into the the Newbottle reservoir for the supply of that village.

Extension of Water Mains.—Considerable extensions have been made to the water mains in the district during the past year. The whole of the new houses on the Villa Estate, those in Hopper Street, Union Street, Bowlby Street, and at North View Terrace, have all a separate supply.

Scavenging.—In many places where it is not only possible but convenient to empty direct into the cart, this is not done. It is only by the keenest vigilance on the part of your Inspector that some of the Contractors are kept up to their work. The fouling of the back streets and yards is a serious nuisance and a danger to public health and should not be allowed. Complaint was made as to the foul condition of a portion of the Hall Lane. Privy ashpit refuse had been scattered along the road, but by whom your Inspector was not able to find out although it has been reported that the culprit was one of the Contractors. Should any repetition of this abominable nuisance occur, instant proceedings should be taken against the guilty persons.

Ventilation of Sewers.—The sewers are regularly and systematically flushed and disinfected so as to keep them sweet and prevent them from filling up. A six-inch sewer ventilator was fixed on the gable end of 41 Robinson Street, and connections were made in West Back George Street and South Back Robinson Street, the one ventilator thus acting as outlets for the two sections of sewer.

Iron sewer ventilating columns have been fixed at the back of Mautland Street and near the bridge at Chilton Moor. Close-fitting covers have been provided in each case. The erection of these ventilators

has had the desired effect in remedying the nuisance arising from the manholes, as since their erection no complaints have been made.

The sewers in the Colliery Row district have subsided to such an extent as to render it imperative that they should be re-laid. An extensive survey of the whole of the sewers has been made, and it is proposed to carry out the work immediately.

Footpaths.—The whole of the footpaths in Union Street have been re-laid with tar paving, and those in Robinson Street will be dealt with in a similar manner shortly.

The footpath along the Rectory wall and the one by the Church wall, have been made up with tarred whinstone chippings. A new asphalt footpath has been laid at Front Street, Colliery Row. Considerable improvement has been made to the footpath at Nesham Place. The retaining wall has been repaired and raised in places so as to reduce the very awkward and dangerous cross-fall which previously existed, and new asphalt paths have been laid, and the improvement is certainly one of the best of its kind yet carried out by your Council.

The footpaths in the Market Place and New Town have also been overhauled and put into a thorough state of repair.

Street Formation, Villa Estate.—Five of the streets on this estate have been made up and the apportionments have been completed and most of the money is now in the hands of the Treasurer. There is a regrettable tendency, however, on the part of some of the owners to defer, if not to object to the payment of their portion of the charge for such work, with the result that the Council feel somewhat diffident in undertaking further work of this kind, much of which still requires to be done.

Private Streets, Ironside Estate.—Although plans and estimates have been prepared it is to be regretted that the work of making up the streets has not yet been proceeded with. The repayment of the money expended in making up the streets on the Villa Estate has not yet been completed, thus rendering it impossible, without a very heavy tax on the rates, to carry out the much needed work of forming the streets in question. Your Surveyor, however, has completed plans and specifications for the making-up of Ironside Street itself, and a portion of Back Sunderland Street. This work is certainly much needed, as many of our back streets are in a very deplorable condition, especially in wet weather.

Wayside Seats.—Five new plank seats, similar to those erected in Durham Road, have been fixed during the past year, three in Newbottle Street and two at Colliery Row.

Hospital.—The Isolation Hospital at Dene Cottages has been thoroughly overhauled, repaired, cleansed and painted throughout. New bedding has also been provided for all the beds so that everything is in perfect order.

Sewage Disposal Works.—Considerable difficulty was experienced during the latter end of last year with our Sewage Farm. It was impossible to deal with the large quantity of water finding its way to the farm. Several reports were drawn up dealing with the condition of the works. The Council subsequently met the County Health Inspector on the spot and he was good enough to express himself in favour of the

report and suggestions submitted by your able Surveyor.

Your Surveyor was at once instructed to prepare plans, specifications, &c., for the laying down of the Detritus and Liquefying Tanks. This was carried out and the work is now completed. The old method of land filtration was found to be quite unsuitable for the district, so that it was decided to excavate one large bed and to form a Percolation Filter to take the night flow of sewage, which is of a dilute character, together with the storm water. Suitable under drains were laid and the excavation filled in to a depth of from four to five feet with engine ashes and the sewage distributed over the beds by means of half channel pipes.

It is gratifying to know that the filter is working to our entire satisfaction, and that the County Inspector has expressed himself as highly pleased with the effluent obtained, which is clear and sparkling in appearance and free from all smell. I presume it is the intention of the Council to carry out further works, such as the provision of other filters which will have the effect of producing an effluent of an equally satisfactory character, and thus do away with the intolerable stench arising from the stagnant water lying on the land for long periods together.

The Houghton Burn, from the entrance to the culvert at the east end of the Market Place, has been excavated and cleared of all deposit such as large stones, gravel, &c., the whole of which, together with a large quantity of hard stones excavated from the Cemetery, has been used in making up the foundation of the new road leading from Edwin Street to the Market Place. This road has now a substantial foundation, and when finished will be a great improvement to the town.

Highways.—The whole of the Dairy Lane from the Rectory Corner to Moor's Bridge has been coated with 2½ inch slag macadam and thoroughly consolidated with a steam roller. The whole length of Hetton Road, from the top of Dairy Lane to the boundary has been made up with slag macadam and properly blinded with slag chippings and steam rolled, and a considerable length of Durham Main Road has been treated in a like manner.

Tramways.—The new Electric Tramway System is now in working order and should prove of immense benefit to the district. The Contractors for the work still have some of the paths to reinstate, but the work is expected to be carried out in the near future.

Work to be done.—It is intended to make up several of the footpaths with tar paving, and to lay down new concrete flags in Newbottle Street from the foot of Mautland Street to the corner of Robinson Street. This is a much needed improvement, as the footpath here is in a badly broken condition.

It is proposed to erect new Council Offices on the existing site. The building will be set back so as to widen the street which is very narrow at this particular place. The widening of the street in question is one of the most important improvements carried out by your Council, and commends itself to the hearty approval of the whole community, as vehicular traffic at this important spot was always attended with serious risks. Some disappointment, however, has been felt that your Council did not decide to combine a Town Hall with the new offices, as the

town is practically without a building of the kind in which to hold a public meeting or an entertainment of any sort.

Houghton Feast.—Like its predecessors the Feast of 1905 passed off without a hitch. The attendance was as large as ever, and the behaviour of the crowd was all that could be desired. The usual notice was served upon the Show people, requesting them to collect into convenient form all refuse matter for removal by the Council's cart, which was in attendance each morning until eight o'clock, and removed all refuse, slop water, &c., as required. This had the effect of keeping the place free from nuisance of any kind. So successful were the arrangements that not a single complaint was received as to damage to property or as to nuisance arising from the proceedings. The amount collected as tolls constituted a record, and your Inspector was congratulated on the successful way in which he had discharged his somewhat difficult and onerous duties.

Factories and Workshops Act, 1901.—I made my usual inspection of the Factories and Workshops both alone and in conjunction with your Inspector. In one case the privy was of improper construction, and the urinal was not drained; in another the privy was overflowing and the basin of a W.C. was very foul and required scouring. The white-washing of one of the premises had not been properly attended to, and a backyard was much broken up, causing pools of water to accumulate after wet weather.

These were all the defects found on our rounds of inspection, and they have all been attended to. With respect to air space, ventilation, floor drainage and the provision of suitable conveniences, everything was in accordance with the requirements of the Act.

We have no public bakehouse or dangerous trades in our district.

Public Lighting.—Three new lamps have been erected on the Villa Estate, and one each at the rear of the Maltster's Arms, Market Place, and Back Station Road.

Streets.—Some of our private streets are in a very unsatisfactory condition, but your Council has wisely decided, after Ironside Street has been made up and finished, to take the other streets in turn. This is a much needed work and should be proceeded with at the earliest possible moment, as the people in these parts have a real and substantial grievance.

Spouting.—There has been a decided improvement in the spouting of the district. I should prefer, however, to see all the down-comers discharge into the gutter through a proper channel in place of on to the footpath, as is sometimes the case.

Water Supply.—Your Surveyor has kindly furnished me with the following particulars respecting the consumption of water in the district during the past year.

The total consumption of water, for all purposes, for the past year, has been 59,204,000 gallons, equal to a daily average of 162,000 gallons. The total consumption for trade purposes, as registered by meters, has been 15,414,000, or a daily average of 42,000 gallons.

Sewer flushing, steam rolling and street watering purposes have consumed 328,500 gallons, equal to a daily average of 900 gallons.

The total consumption for domestic purposes, 22 new buildings, trades supplied other than by meter, schools having automatic flushing tanks, 11 in all, 29 public houses, 10 cowbyres, 10 butchers, and about 80 horse-keepers, has been 43,461,500 gallons, or a daily average of 119,000 gallons, or 12·94 gallons per head of the population taken at 9,190 based on the fact that during the twelve months there were in the district 1,838 inhabited houses, taken as five persons per house.

Houses Let in Lodgings.—A systematic inspection was made of Nesham Hall, and a detailed report by your Inspector and myself was submitted for your consideration, with the result that, as advised by your Medical Officer, it was decided to adopt special bye-laws dealing with tenemented property. This will do much to strengthen the hands of your Council, as this kind of property is decidedly on the increase in the district, and requires careful supervision.

I have received much valuable assistance from your able Surveyor, and I beg to offer him my thanks for his ready co-operation in all matters belonging to the sanitary condition of the district.

New Houses.—Twenty-two new houses have been built in the district during the past year.

The Glebe Sewage Farm, which is in your district, Gentlemen, has been water-logged for a long time, so that in hot weather it becomes very offensive, especially when the wind is in a certain direction. I understand it is the intention of the Houghton-le-Spring Rural, and Hetton-le-Hole Urban, District Councils to follow the example of your Council and lay down similar works to those so successfully carried out by your Surveyor, and which are giving us every satisfaction. It is to be hoped that the work will be proceeded with at once, as in its present condition the sewage farm is very objectionable.

Lambton Collieries.—As you know, Gentlemen, the Colliery Company keep a large permanent staff of workmen for the express purpose of keeping in repair the large number of houses under their control, so that a large amount of work is voluntarily carried out in this way.

I am indebted to Councillor Palliser for a detailed statement of the work done by the Company during the past year. It is impossible, however, to give it in detail in my Annual Report as it would occupy too much of the limited space at my disposal, but I need not assure you, Gentlemen, that the work in question is both important and substantial, and reflects great credit upon the Company who are ever ready and willing to carry out any reasonable improvements for the benefit of their workmen which your Officers may suggest or recommend.

Death-rate.—In estimating the consumption of water for the past year your Surveyor has based his calculations upon a population of 9,190, which he arrives at by multiplying the number of houses in the district by five. Under ordinary circumstances this is considered a fair way of estimating the population, but we saw that the last Census returns did not justify us in taking that course then, as by so doing we arrived at a population of 1,061 in excess of the actual population thus given. There has been, however, such a steady increase of population during the last few years, especially since the Electric Tramway Scheme was commenced, that the Surveyor's estimate may not be far wrong.

I have erred, however, on the safe side, and in stating the population at 8,726, I am quite satisfied that I am considerably under the mark.

In dealing with the death-rate in my last year's report, I said "I fear we must consider our death-rate high even for a mixed population such as ours. This is the more to be regretted when it is pointed out that the high mortality is the result of the large number of deaths among infants and young children. But for this circumstance our death-rate for the year would be quite satisfactory."

Gentlemen, I have no regrets or apologies to make this year. I think when you have compared the Chief Vital Statistics for the County with our own (a copy of which I am enabled to append to my Report through the courtesy of the County Medical Officer), you will agree with me that I am justified in offering you my heartiest congratulations on the satisfactory state of the public health during the past year.

Last year our death-rate and infant mortality were respectively 24·02 and 184·2, while for this year they are 16·04 and 143·6.

Our Birth-rate, as you will observe, Gentlemen, is still high, higher, possibly, than in any other district in the County, an additional reason why I should offer you my congratulations.

Concluding Remarks.—In conclusion, Gentlemen, I beg again to thank you for your ever ready and willing support in all matters falling within the scope of my duties as your Medical Officer of Health. My relations with your Council, extending now for close upon twenty-five years, have always been most cordial, and in presenting my Reports for your consideration my suggestions and recommendations are always carefully considered and well received, and everything which has for its object the sanitary improvement of the town meets with your heartiest approval.

I have the honour to be,

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

Your obedient Servant,

D. S. PARK,
MEDICAL OFFICER.

TABLE I.
Vital Statistics of Whole District during 1905 and Previous Years.

Year	Population estimated to Middle of each Year.	Births		Total Deaths Registered in the District.						Deaths of Non- residents registered in Public Institu- tions in the District.	Deaths of Residents registered in Public Institu- tions beyond the District.	Nett Deaths at all Ages belonging to the District.		
		Number	Rate	Under 1 Year of Age		At all Ages.		Total Deaths in Public Institu- tions in the District.	Deaths of Non- residents registered in Public Institu- tions in the District.			Deaths of Residents registered in Public Institu- tions beyond the District.	Number.	Rate
				Number.	Rate per 1000 Births registered	Number.	Rate							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13		
1895	6,670	263	39·4	53	201·5	162	23·23	13	4	7	165	23·09		
1896	6,720	304	45·2	37	118·4	136	20·09	7	3	3	136	20·09		
1897	6,760	305	45·1	30	131·1	99	14·64	16	2	—	97	14·3		
1898	7,202	289	40·1	62	214·5	151	19·3	17	12	3	142	20·02		
1899	7,500	297	39·0	52	175	166	21·6	16	5	—	161	21·4		
1900	7,700	314	40·7	45	143·3	141	18·3	19	12	7	136	17·6		
1901	7,854	339	42·7	50	147·4	147	18·7	16	9	2	140	17·8		
1902	7,984	335	42·1	45	134·3	158	19·7	16	13	2	147	18·4		
1903	8,056	337	41·8	68	201·7	194	24·3	21	10	4	188	23·3		
1904	8,574	342	39·6	63	184·2	206	24·02	9	6	6	206	24·02		
Averages for years 1895-1904	7,502	312·5	41·5	50	165·2	156	20·3	15	7	3	151	20		
1905	8,726	355	40·6	51	143·6	144	16·5	9	6	2	140	16·04		

Area of District in acres (exclusive of area covered by water), 1,551 acres.

Total population at all ages 7858 } at Census of
Number of inhabited houses 1833 }
Average number of persons per house 4 } 1901.

Institution within the District receiving sick and infirm persons from outside the District: Union Workhouse.

Institutions outside the District receiving sick and infirm persons from the District: Sunderland Infirmary, Durham Co. Lunatic Asylum.

TABLE III.
Cases of Infectious Disease notified during the Year 1905.

Notifiable Disease.	Cases notified in whole District.							Total Cases notified in each Locality.		No. of Cases removed to Hospital from each Locality.
	At all Ages.	At Ages—Years						Houghton	Workhouse	
		Under 1	1 to 5	5 to 15	15 to 25	25 to 65	65 and upwards			
Small-pox	
Cholera	
Diphtheria	...	11	...	5	...	2	...	11	...	
Membranous Croup	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	2	...
Erysipelas	...	16	...	...	2	10	3	14	2
Scarlet Fever	...	32	...	16	...	...	...	32	2
Typhus Fever	
Enteric Fever	...	15	...	5	4	6	...	15	1	
Relapsing Fever	
Continued Fever	
Puerperal Fever	
Plague	
Totals...	...	76	...	23	26	6	18	74	2	
									4	

Isolation Hospital: Houghton Urban Isolation Hospital.

TABLE IV.

Causes of, and Ages at, Death during Year 1905.

Causes of Death.	Deaths at the subjoined Ages of 'Residents' whether occurring in or beyond the District							Deaths at all ages of 'Residents' belonging to Localities whether occurring in or beyond the District				Total Deaths whether of Residents or Non-Residents' in Public Institutions in the District
	All Ages	Under 1 year	1 and under 5	5 and under 15	15 and under 25	25 and under 65	65 and upwards	Houghton	Workhouse	Infirmary	Asylum	
Small-pox ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Measles ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Scarlet Fever ...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...
Whooping-cough	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...
Diphtheria and membranous croup	4	...	2	2	...	...	...	4	...	...	...	...
Croup ...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...
Fever —												
Typhus... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Enteric... ..	3	...	...	1	...	2	...	3	...	...	...	...
Other continued	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Epidemic influenza	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Cholera ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Plague ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Diarrhœa ...	2	2	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...
Enteritis ..	5	5	...	...	...	...	...	5	...	...	...	...
Puerperal Fever ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Erysipelas ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Other septic diseases ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Phthisis ...	5	...	...	...	2	3	...	5	...	...	...	1
Pulmonary tuberculosis												
Other tubercular diseases... ..	4	...	2	...	1	1	...	4	...	...	...	...
Cancer, malignant disease ...	6	...	...	...	...	1	5	6	...	...	...	...
Bronchitis ...	3	...	1	...	...	1	1	3	...	...	...	...
Pneumonia ...	16	4	6	...	...	2	4	16	...	...	...	...
Pleurisy ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Other diseases of Respiratory organs	2	2	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...
Alcoholism—												
Cirrhosis of liver	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Venereal diseases...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Premature birth ...	12	12	...	...	...	...	...	12	...	...	...	...
Diseases and accidents of parturition	2	...	...	...	...	2	...	2	...	...	...	...
Heart diseases ...	19	1	...	...	1	6	11	17	1	1	...	2
Accidents ...	4	...	1	...	1	...	2	3	...	...	...	...
Suicides ...	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...
Senile decay ...	5	...	...	...	...	...	5	4	1	...	...	4
Marasmus...	12	11	1	...	...	...	...	12	...	...	...	...
Convulsions ...	8	7	1	...	...	...	...	8	...	...	...	1
Poisoning by Oxalic Acid ...	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...
All other causes ...	23	5	1	1	...	9	7	22	1	...	...	1
All causes ...	140	50	17	4	5	29	35	135	3	1	1	9

Infant Mortality during the Year 1935. Deaths from stated Causes in Weeks and Months under One Year of Age.

Births in the Year : Legitimate, 333 ; Illegitimate, 22. Deaths from all Causes at all Ages, 140. Population (estimated in middle of 1905), 8726.

Form prescribed by the Secretary of State for the

CERTIFYING SURGEON'S ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER, 1905.

Table I.—Persons examined for Certificates of Fitness for Employment in Factories or Workshops.

Age-Class in which employment was sought	EXAMINED			CERTIFIED			REJECTED		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Children or Young Persons presented as being—									
Under 14 years of age intended to be employed half time ... ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Between 13 and 14 years of age intended to be employed full time 	1	...	1	1	...	1	...	...	...
Between 14 and 16 years of age 	18	7	25	18	5	23	...	2	2
Total	19	7	26	19	5	24	...	2	2

APPENDIX.

Summary of Work done in the Inspector of Nuisances' Department during the year 1905, in the Urban District of Houghton-le-Spring.

I. Public Health Acts.	Number of Informal written Notices by Inspector.	Number of Formal Notices by order of Authority.	Number of Nuisances abated after Notice.	General Remarks.
Dwelling-houses & Schools				
Foul Conditions ...	20	—	20	
Structural Defects ...	19	—	19	
Overcrowding ...	—	—	—	
Lodging-houses ...	4	—	4	
Dairies and Milkshops ...	—	—	—	
Cowsheds ...	13	—	13	
Bakehouses ...	—	—	—	
Slaughter-houses ...	11	—	11	
Ashpits and Privies ...	16	—	16	1 converted into W.C. 12 Ashpits recon- structed
Deposits of Refuse and Manure ...	—	—	—	
Waterclosets ...	7	—	7	
Defective Yard Paving ...	25	—	25	
House Drainage—				
Defective Traps ...	1	—	1	
No Disconnection from Sewers ...	—	—	—	
Other Faults ...	22	—	22	
Water Supply ...	11	—	11	
Pigsties ...	1	—	1	
Animals Improperly Kept	—	—	—	
Offensive Trades ...	—	—	—	
Smoke Nuisances ...	—	—	—	
Other Nuisances ...	23	—	23	
TOTALS ...	173	—	173	

II. Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1890.

	Number
Formal Notices served ...	—
Dwellings dealt with ...	—
Dwellings made habitable after formal notice ...	—
Closing Orders applied for...	—
Closing Orders granted by Magistrates ...	—
Dwellings permanently closed ...	—

III. Water, Food and Drugs.

	Number
Samples of Water taken for Analysis	—
Samples of Water condemned as unfit for use...	—
Seizure of Unwholesome Food ...	—
Convictions for exposing or selling unwholesome Food ...	—
Samples of Food and Drugs taken for Analysis ...	—
Samples of Food found Adulterated	—

IV. Precautions against Infectious Disease.

Lots of Infectious Bedding stoved or destroyed ...	5
Houses disinfected after Infectious Disease ...	5
Schools ...	—
Prosecutions for exposure of infected persons or things ...	—
Convictions for ...	—

JOHN W. HOLBROOK, Inspector of Nuisances.

ADMINISTRATIVE COUNTY OF DURHAM.

CHIEF VITAL STATISTICS for 1905, and their comparison with 1904
and the average of ten years, 1895—1904.

Estimated population (1905) ... 811,560.
 „ „ (1904) ... 801,100.

	Annual rate per 1000 population.		Mean rates for 10 years 1895- 1904.
	1905	1904	
Birth-rate	34·4	35·6	35·5
Death-rate... ..	17·4	18·3	18·1
Zymotic Death-rate	2·37	2·59	2·2 4
Infant mortality-rate (per 1000 births)...	159	162	165
Small-pox	0·002	0·03	0·008
Scarlet fever	0·09	0·16	0·19
Diphtheria and Membranous Croup ...	0·25	0·29	0·17
Fever (enteric and continued)	0·20	0·15	0·22
Measles	0·48	0·55	0·42
Whooping Cough	0·42	0·43	0·36
Diarrhœa	0·90	0·95	0·84
Enteritis, &c.	0·36	0·38	0·59
Phthisis	1·00	1·07	1·16
Other tubercular diseases... ..	0·74	0·92	0·91
Respiratory diseases	3·16	2·92	3·12

HOUGHTON URBAN DISTRICT.

SCARLET FEVER.

Date	Sex	Age	Residence	Remarks
1905				
Jan. 3	F	4	20 Robinson Street ...	
„ 8	M	2	22 Low Hill-side ...	
„ 13	M	4	6 Johnson's Crescent ...	
„ 19	M	20	20 Lambton St., New Town	
Feb. 1	F	7	32 Quarry Row ...	
„ 9	F	8	34 Sunderland Street ...	
„ 16	F	3	6 High Hill-side ...	
„ 20	F	7	25 Prospect Row ...	
„ 22	M	4	5 Low Hill-side ...	
March 1	M	2½	27 Sunderland Street ...	Telephone Office. All communication with house cut off. Fever room disinfected, and no one allowed in. Operating girl informed of the fact of scarlet fever.
March 7	M	5	5 Low Hill-side ...	Secondary
„ 7	F	5	1 Stocksfield Place...	
„ 11	M	8	11 Balfour Street ...	
„ 21	M	8	5 The Terrace ...	
„ 20	F	7	11 Balfour Street ...	Secondary
April 17	M	4	25 Sunderland Street ...	Sent to Hospital
June 23	M	2	2 Bink's Yard ...	Child disquimating
„ 27	M	5	24 Ironside Street ...	
Aug. 14	F	5	5 Cross Street ...	
„ 28	F	9	The Quay ...	
Sept. 2	M	4	5 Cross Street ...	Secondary
„ 4	F	1½	47 Quarry Row ...	
„ 11	F	12	3 Elm Place ...	Removed to Hospital
„ 12	M	3	32 Robinson Street ...	
„ 18	M	2	5 Cross Street ...	Secondary
Nov. 4	F	5	Front Street, Colliery Row	
„ 17	M	4	2 Wallace St., Villa Estate	
Dec. 7	M	6	85 Long Row, Colliery Row	
„ 13	M	6	24 Mautland Street ...	Disquimating stage
„ 23	F	1½	13 Quarry Row ...	
„ 23	F	5	„ ...	
„ 31	M	1	24 Mautland Street ...	Secondary

ERYSIPELAS.

Date	Sex	Age	Residence	Remarks
1905				
Jan. 11	F	22	2 Nesham Yard ...	
Feb. 3	F	59	13 Pit Row... ..	
„ 3	F	60	21 Robinson Street ...	
„ 6	F	27	Newbottle Street ...	
March 1	M	40	Sunderland Street ...	
April 22	F	95	Workhouse... ..	
„ 22	F	75	„	

HOUGHTON URBAN DISTRICT.

ERYSIPELAS—continued.

Date	Sex	Age	Residence	Remarks
1905				
May 1	F	2	15 Low Hillside ...	Parish Case
June 30	F	63	1 Edwin Street ...	
Sept. 25	F	41	71 North View Terrace ...	A second attack
„ 28	F	56	4 Robinson Street ...	
Oct. 1	M	69	2 Mautland Street ...	
„ 14	M	42	Nesham Hall Yard ...	Removed to Hospital
Nov. 1	M	28	10 Outram Street ...	
„ 24	F	43	22 Mautland Street ...	
Dec. 4	F	21	Seaham Road ...	

TYPHOID FEVER.

Date	Sex	Age	Residence	Remarks
1905				
Jan. 30	F	43	9 Mildred Street ...	
Feb. 2	F	6	„ ...	Secondary
„ 2	F	7	33 D'Arcy Street ...	Yard Drain offensive
„ 44	M	13	9 Mildred Street ...	Secondary
„ 23	F	19	Chilton Moor ...	Blames offensive smell from town manure when taking a walk after Influenza
March 29	M	39	Half-way House ...	Removed to Hospital
April 4	M	8	7 Shield's Place ...	
July 7	M	30	2 Low Hill-side ...	
„ 19	M	34	46 Bowlby Street ...	
Aug. 8	F	16	14 High Hill-side ...	
Sept. 2	M	29	1 Ironside Street ...	
„ 10	F	26	32 Mautland Street ...	Imported from Lambton
Oct. 28	F	20	Market Place ...	
„ 28	F	17	7 Violet Street ...	
Dec. 8	F	11	Shop, Sunderland Street...	

MEMBRANOUS CROUP.

Date	Sex	Age	Residence	Remarks
1905				
April 15	M	3	Brown's Yard, Sunderland Street ...	Died suddenly before notification received
July 11	M	1	29 Sunderland Street ...	„

HOUGHTON URBAN DISTRICT.

DIPHTHERIA.

Date	Sex	Age	Residence	Remarks
1905				
Feb. 1	F	35	35 George Street ...	House wall damp
„ 3	M	8	Hopper Square ...	
„ 13	F	11	2 Union Street ...	
„ 24	F	29	White House Cottages ...	Refused hospital
March 14	M	8	8 Fatherley Terrace ...	
July 7	M	4	9 Elizabeth Street... ..	
Oct. 15	F	4	12 Stanley Street	
Nov. 29	M	5	22 Lambton Street... ..	
„ 30	M	4	2 Wallace Street	{ Scarlet Fever in the same family
„ 30	M	2	„	
Dec. 20	F	6	66 Quarry Row	